

APPENDIX K

Flags That Have Flown Over California

Ten different flags have flown over California since 1542. Prior to the restoration of the Capitol, replicas of these flags were mounted on the rotunda railing on the second floor. A brief description of these flags follows:

The Spanish Empire Flag, 1542–1785. This is the royal standard of Carlos V which appeared at the head of every band of Spanish explorers, as Spain had no national flag at the time. The field is white and bears the arms of Castile and Leon, with the royal crown at the top of the shield and around it the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

The Flag of England, 1579. Planted by Sir Francis Drake at Drake's Bay in 1579, it flew over California for only 37 days. The flag is white with the red cross of St. George.

The Spanish National Ensign, 1785–1822. The flag of the Spanish Empire was replaced by the newly adopted Spanish national flag in 1785. The flag is red with a broad center stripe of yellow which bears the shield and crown with the arms of Castile and Leon.

The Flag of Russia, 1812–1841. Russian trading posts were established along the northern coast of California at Fort Ross, and remained until Captain John Sutter bought out their properties in 1841. The flag is white with the blue diagonal cross of St. Andrew. With it flew the flag of the Russian American Company which was the same as the then Russian merchant flag, except that it bore the double eagle in the white portion.

The Buenos Aires Flag, 1818. Raised at Monterey by the pirate Hypolite Bouchard when he raided and captured the city, the flag was flown for only 16 days in November of 1818. It consists of three bars of equal width, the outer two of blue, and the middle one of white with a yellow sun to the left of its center.

The Mexican Flag, 1822–1846. Raised over California when Mexico secured her independence from Spain, and flown until it was replaced by the American Flag. The Mexican flag has three broad stripes, one each of green, white, and red, with an eagle perched on a cactus in the center of the white stripe.

The Fremont Flag, 1842–1846. Special American Flag assigned to Captain John Charles Fremont, who carried it on his explorations from 1842 to 1846. There are 26 stars representing the 26 states then in the Union. The eagle carried a pipe of peace instead of the usual 13 arrows in order to reassure the Native Americans that Fremont's mission was one of peace.

The First Bear Flag, 1846. Raised at Sonoma on June 14, 1846, by a small band of Americans in revolt against Mexican authority. Replaced by the Stars and Stripes on July 9, 1846, when news of the seizure of California by Commodore Sloat reached the pueblo. The field is white with a red stripe at its lower edge, a brown star in the upper left-hand corner, and a brown bear in the center field of white with the words "California Republic" in black below it.

The Stars and Stripes, 1846. Raised by Commodore Sloat at Monterey on July 7, 1846. It has 28 stars arranged in four rows of seven stars each, and was modified as new states entered the Union. The 31st star, for California when she entered the Union, was added on July 4, 1850.

The Flag of the United States. The Flag of the United States contained 48 stars with the admission of New Mexico and Arizona in 1912. The admissions were on January 6th and February 14th, respectively, and the new stars were added on July 4, 1912. Alaska was admitted as the 49th state on January 3, 1959, and the 49th star was added July 4, 1959. Hawaii became the 50th state on August 21, 1959, and the 50th star was added to the National Flag on July 4, 1960.